# DEPARTMENTAL SAFETY PLANNING TIPS

As a result of certain kinds of behavior from students, it may be necessary to set up a departmental safety plan. For example, if you think that a student has been threatening to you in the past and s/he shows up at your office, you may need help in dealing with the student. Quite often it is the people you work with and who are in the closest physical proximity who can provide the help you need. The following section will help you to define a security plan for your department.

## Security Plan

First and foremost, call MCC College Police to help with setting up a plan. The following are the kinds of behavior you should be concerned with:

* Unwilling to leave the building
* Interrupting the business of the department
* Bizarre statements/actions
* Angry/ verbally abusive/ yelling
* Behaving suspiciously
* Threatening
* Violent

**There are at least three types of responses open to you.**

* 1. ***Individual response***: Do what you can to get the person to stop the behavior; try to handle it yourself (if person is violent or potentially violent, call the police).
	2. ***Get assistance from others within your department*** and elsewhere in the building.
		+ Have someone come and stand near you for support.
		+ Have someone come to help you deal with the person.
		+ Call or speed-dial a designated person for help.
		+ Have someone find a designated person to help.
		+ Have a code phrase that can be used when contacting the reception desk or a co-worker
	3. ***Get assistance from the MCC Police***

(in cases of violent or potentially violent behaviors)

* + - Have another person call 911.
		- Retreat to a locked office or another safe space while waiting for the police.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AS YOU DEVELOP YOUR DEPARTMENTAL SAFETY PLAN

1. What specific areas do you need to prepare in your department?
	* Reception
	* Individual offices
2. How can we in the department help each other when faced with difficult situations?
	* What will the procedures be for getting help from others within your area?
	* What do you expect of the person when s/he comes to a colleague’s assistance?
3. When you need another level of assistance – above what can be provided from within your department:
	* Who will be your designated “helpers,” and are they readily available?
	* How will you reach them?
4. What should someone do while waiting for help?
5. What should be the protocol if someone observes an individual disturbing other people by yelling, acting bizarrely, etc.?
6. How will you coordinate planning and support with nearby departments?
7. What does your department need to carry out these plans?
	* Specifically, what kinds of training do you think would help?

**An Example of a Possible Scenario**

You are working in the student services office. One week ago, a student waiting in line began speaking very loudly and abusively about how the financial aid office “screwed up,” and now he has to pay for it. By the time the student reached you he was quite agitated. As you tried to explain to the student what he needed to do, he said “the next time I’m here, I’m gonna blow up the place.” Today he is at your window again.

• How could you have prepared for this?

• What do you do?

This scenario (or one that may be more appropriate for you specific department) discussed in your group setting can help you prepare and implement a safety plan.